

DOE News Release – Wildland fire update

Date: Thursday, July 19, 2007

Time: 4:40 p.m.

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EIGHTH FOLLOW-UP NEWS RELEASE FOR INL EMERGENCY

Fire status at 4:40 p.m. July 19 – Rangeland fire 50 percent contained

By late afternoon today, the Twin Buttes rangeland fire on the southeastern edge of the INL Site was approximately 50 percent contained. Firefighters and heavy equipment crews have made strong progress in taming the fire, which began Wednesday evening.

They used heavy equipment to cut fire lines to slow the advance of flames. A Bureau of Land Management helicopter was dropping water on the fire.

Other information:

- Officials say the fire has burned more than 4,800 acres. No INL facilities are threatened by the fire.
- The fire is primarily active in the southern section of the East Butte area. The fire is being pushed by winds gusting between 16 and 25 mph.
- Authorities are assessing fire damage to communications equipment atop the East Butte. An investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing.
- In the afternoon, law enforcement reopened U.S. Highway 20 to traffic. Highway 20 may be intermittently closed throughout the evening and night, depending on the progression of the fire line.
- More than 50 firefighters and equipment crew members from INL, the Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, and the BLM are battling the fire.
- The Materials and Fuels Complex on the desert Site was closed today. Other INL Site facilities operated on normal schedules today.
- For updates on bus operations, employees should call the INL bus hotline toll-free at 1-877-424-4635 for a recorded message on current bus operations.

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